

**ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE**

A method for generating a cryptographic key from an analog signal representative of an image of a biometric feature of a user involves deriving binary output from the analog signal, and applying a selection algorithm to extract values from the binary output and arrange the values to form an identity bit string (IBS) of the user. The IBS may be modified by a transformation algorithm to generate a cryptographic key for decrypting messages sent to the user. The IBS may also be used to authenticate the user before a message can be decrypted.

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